THE

OBLIGATION

Which lyes upon

MINISTERS

To Preach the

GOSPEL

TO

Other Places and Pariſhes beſides their own, and in other Places beſides the Temple, though others ſhould be againſt it..

Opened and Vindicated in a

SERMON

Preached by *J. Cheney.*

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TO THE
READER.

READER,

INſtead of a Preface or Epiſtle Dedicatory with the uſual excuſes for writing, and telling thee what reaſons I have in theſe critical times to publiſh what is here publiſhed; I ſhall rather preſent to thy judgment and conſideration, ſome informing and argumentative matter touching the courſe of Biſhops and their Courts in the denouncing of Excommunications by a Lay Chancellor. Only let me crave this one reaſonable requeſt of thee, That as thou expecteſt from me that I ſhould do the part of an honeſt and conſiderate Writer; ſo thou be as careful of that which pertains to thee, that thou be an honeſt and conſiderate Reader.

There are two corruptions and grievances in the conſtitution and government of the Church of England *which call for reformation: 1. The one is the Office and Calling of the Biſhops Chancellor. 2. The other is the great abuſe thereof, and eſpecially in pronouncing Excommunications.*

1. *Touching the former, no man can ſay that the Biſhops Chancellour is a civil Magiſtrate; for he hath no coercive power, he doth not claim any, nor can he have any, becauſe he ſtiles himſelf the Biſhops Commiſſary, or Vicar in Spirituals. Now the Biſhop himſelf having no coercive power, can give none to his Vicar or Deputy. To be a Magiſtrate, and have no coercive power, or ſword of juſtice, wherewith to execute wrath upon him that doth evil,* Rom. 13. 4. *is to be a meer cypher; ſuch a Magiſtrate is no more a true Magiſtrate than a dead corpſe or picture is a living man.*

Nor can any man ſay that the Chancellor is in the uſual ſenſe and acceptation of the word, a Clergy man, or one that is a right and true Church-officer. For he is not in holy Orders. He is neither Biſhop, Prieſt, nor Deacon; and the Church of England *acknowledgeth no other Orders of men in the Miniſtry; no man takes the Chancellor to be a Paſtor or Miniſter of the Goſpel. He himſelf claims no ſuch*

office. He hath no authority to Baptize, and give the Lords-Supper, and conſequently he can have no authority to do other proper Authoritative, Paſtoral and Epiſcopal acts; no more than a woman can have to Baptize, or any Lay-man, Magiſtrate, or Juſtice of Peace. Unto whom it belongeth not to take in, unto them it cannot belong to caſt out. Chancellors do not claim any power or authority of admitting Souls into the Church by Baptiſm, or of admitting perſons into the Miniſtry by Ordination; and therefore they can have no power of degrading and cenſuring Miniſters, or of caſting any out of Chriſts Church by penal Church-cenſures and Excommunication. The Paſtoral and Epiſcopal office is intire, and is not to be mangled or cut into parts. It was unto the Apoſtles, and in them, to their ſucceſſors, that our Lord Jeſus gave the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the power of Miniſterial binding and looſing, and of remitting and retaining ſins, Mat. 16. 19. Joh. 20. 23. *So is the opinion of all ſound Divines. See Dr.* Stillingfleet's *Tract of Excommunication in the end of his* Irenicum; *and the Biſhop of* Hereford's *Tract of the* Naked Truth, *who calls the Chancellors office an horrid abuſe of the Divine Authority.*

This office of Chancellor is a thing unknown to the ancient Churches; it is very well known what oppoſition the Biſhops and that Side do make againſt the Presbyterian *ruling-Elder, or lay Elder, as he is commonly called; alledging that it is the new fangled device of* Calvin *at* Geneva, *and never known in the Church of Chriſt before his days. If I miſtake not, it is Biſhop* Hall *or ſome other, in a Treatiſe of Epiſcopacy by Divine right,* That makes offer to forfeit his life to juſtice, and his reputation to ſhame, if any man living can ſhew, that ever there was a ruling-Elder in the Chriſtian world, till *Farell* and *Viret* firſt created them. *Good man, look at home, your own Chancellor is one ſuch, a meer lay-unordained ruling Elder: I do not contend againſt the Biſhops lay or ruling Chancellor, and allow the others ruling-Elder. While they do hotly diſpute againſt the Chancellors office, and bind themſelves by ſolemn Covenant to extirpate the ſame, and afterwards ſet up a meer unordained ruling-Elder in Gods Church, do but build with one hand what they pull'd down with the other, and clearly overthrow their own cauſe. And on the other hand, while the Epiſcopal Divines do vehemently contend againſt* Calvin's *lay Elder, or ruling unordained Elder, and yet allow and contend for a lay-Chancellor or unordained ruling Commiſſary, what do they but contend againſt themſelves, and give ground to their adverſaries to baffle them with their own weapons? So true it, that all error is its own overthrow, and repugnant to it ſelf.*

ſelf. I do not pretend to be much read in antiquity. But with modeſty I may be bold to affirm, that it cannot be proved from any word in the Bible, that ever the Lord Jeſus Chriſt did appoint and authorize in his Church as a ſtated Church-officer any meer ruling unordained Elder, who had power only to rule, and to do no other Paſtoral and Epiſcopal acts. But in the firſt Churches there were many Elders, Paſtors or Biſhops, who did in common over-ſee the flock, and were joint Paſtors and Church-rulers of particular Congregations, ſuch as that at Epheſus, Philippi, *and the reſt of the* Aſian *and Apoſtolical Churches, every ſuch Elder was an ordained Elder,* Act. 14. 23. Tit. 1. 5 *and was an* Epiſcopus, *Paſtor or ſpiritual overſeer to all the flock,* Act. 20. 17, 28 Phil. 1. 1. *and had compleat Paſtoral power; but for the better government of the Congregation, and watching over all the ſouls under their charge, they did prudently diſtribute their work, and the preaching and teaching part was moſtly committed to him who was moſt eminent; and the reſt of the Elders were imployed as co agents and co-aſſiſtants in other parts of the Paſtoral office. And thus is that ſaying true, and ſoundly underſtood,* Without any ſtreining at all, let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, eſpecially they who labour in the Word and Doctrine, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. *Here is no mention made of any meer ruling unordained Elder. And they do but deceive themſelves, and go about to deceive others, who ſay that a Church-ruler in a proper ſenſe, and a Paſtor, are not one and the ſame. To be a ruler of ſouls in an Eccleſiaſtical ſenſe, is to be a ſpiritual guide, Paſtor, Biſhop or overſeer of ſouls,* Heb. 13. 17.

The Chancellor is neither Magiſtrate nor Miniſter, he is no officer of Gods making. The firſt inſtitution of him is moſt likely to be from the Pope, who takes upon him to do what he liſteth in Gods Church, and to make and unmake officers, and offices, at his pleaſure, and has brought into the Church a ſort of religious men that are neither pure lay men, nor pure Clergy-men, but mungerly between both, as the Monks and Friers, and Religious Orders, as they are called.

Or it may be that when Conſtantine *came to be Emperour, he finding that the Biſhops had been uſed to handle civil cauſes ariſing within the bounds of their own Pariſh (for every Pariſh then was a Biſhoprick, and their Biſhops then were but as our Pariſh-miniſters) he continued this power in their hands; and it is likely the Biſhops might depute or appoint one in their room to be Judg and Arbiter of civil cauſes, becauſe of the Apoſtles words,* 1 Cor. 6. 5. *Or if not this, his original for ought I know might be as that of the ruling Elder, and as* Calvin's *form*

of

of government at Geneva, *where the Paſtors might chuſe and ſelect one or more to be aſſiſtants to them in judging and deciding cauſes Eccleſiaſtical, and doing acts of Diſcipline; whatever his original was, to me it ſeems clear, that the Paſtoral office is but one and intire, and that to be a ruler in Gods Church is to be a Paſtor, and that it pertains to the Paſtors office, and to him alone, authoritatively, to do acts of Diſcipline, rule and government, and that God never appointed any meer ruling unordained Elder, with a bare power to rule and aſſiſt in Church-diſcipline, and no more.*

As to the Chancellors office, he calls himſelf the Biſhops Commiſſary, or his Vicar in Spirituals. Now ſuch an office is clearly void and null in it ſelf. A Biſhop can no more make him a Vicar or Deputy in Spirituals, than he can depute one to fear God for him, and to repent of ſin, and to preach and pray, and baptize for him, and as his Deputy, and to go to Heaven and Hell for him. That rule, Qui facit per alium, facit per ſe, *cannot hold good in Spirituals. When a Miniſter baptizes, he doth it not as the Biſhops Deputy, but as an authorized officer of Chriſt. If a lay-Chancellor take upon him to excommunicate as the Biſhops Deputy or Vicar, the Excommunication is null or illegal. There can be no Deputy or Vicar in the caſe. He then being no Paſtor, having no legal authority from Chriſt, he is an invader, he doth but uſurp the office. Say he is a Paſtor or Goſpel Miniſter, and then you caſhier him from being Chancellor, and the Biſhops Commiſſary or Vicar. Say he is the Biſhops Vicar or Commiſſary, and then you ſay his office is illegal.*

For the Epiſcopal office is perſonal; you may make other men Paſtors by ordination, and then they will have power to do Paſtoral and Epiſcopal acts, and are Paſtors and Biſhops as well as the Biſhop himſelf is. But ſuch the Chancellor is not. Thoſe whom we call Vicars of Pariſhes, have cure of ſouls, they are but Vicars in name; for they are real Paſtors, and have charge of ſouls, and they do all Paſtoral acts not as Vicars or Deputies unto men, but as the immediate authorized officers of Chriſt.

The Chancellor is not in holy Orders. Beſides, it is againſt the current of Scripture, the practice of the Church univerſal, and ſound reaſon, to mangle the Paſtoral and Epiſcopal office; as for a Biſhop to ſay, I ſtrip my ſelf and all the Clergy of the power of exerciſing Diſcipline, and this power I commit to you, you ſhall have no power to baptize, and give the Lords Supper, and ordain Miniſters, &c. but only to be morum cenſor, *a ſpiritual Judg or corrector of manners, to hear and decide cauſes in order to Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline and Excommunication.*

If you ask, why may not a Deputy be made in Spirituals as well as in Civils,

Civils, as a Deputy-steward, a Deputy-judg, a Deputy-king, 2 Sam. 15. 3. 1 King. 22. 47. Act. 13. 7. *I will not contend with you about words and names: But I answer, that a Deputy-steward is a Steward, a Deputy-judg is a Judg, a Deputy-king is a King, and hath authority in the absence of him that deputed him, to do the whole office of a Steward, Judg, or King and chief Magistrate. But now a Chancellor who is the Bishops deputy, hath no power to do the whole office of a Bishop, nor the chief and most ordinary part thereof, but only one or two Episcopal acts, and those rare and of seldom occurrence, as Excommunication, which ought to be done very sparingly. In all the New Testament we read but of one incestuous* Corinthian, *and of two more,* Hymeneus *and* Alexander, *Excommunicated, that I remember. I read indeed of an insolent* Diotrephes *casting brethren out of the Church for no cause,* 2 Joh. *v.* 10.

If the Chancellor be fit to be a Pastor, let him be made one, and let him be duly and orderly ordained like other men, and let him come in by the right door; what else is Ordination for? If he be not fit to be a Pastor, why should he be trusted with any part of the office? either make him a compleat Pastor, or none. Why should he be a Centaur, *half a man, and half a horse; a magistrate and no magistrate, a minister and no minister; he is neither lay man nor clergy-man, but a creature or officer of mans making, worse than nothing. If you will not stand to the Scripture-rule, and sound reason, and the practice of the universal Church, but will go against them all, and make new officers and offices in Gods Church at your pleasure, judg not honest men worthy of silencing, imprisoning, and excommunication, for nonconformity, and refusing to declare unfeigned assent and consent to such corruptions, innovations and disorders in the sacred office. What is the Chancellor less than an invader? And may it not be said to him as the Lords Priests said to King* Uzziah, *It appertaineth not unto thee, O Chancellor, to be a Judg Ecclesiastical, and authoritatively to denounce Church-censures; thou art a trespasser and invader, and it shall not be for thine honour before the Lord God,* 2 Chron. 26. 18. *And if fourscore Priests of the Lord, who were valiant men, withstood King* Uzziah *when he invaded the Priests office, by attempting to burn incense, and God approved their courage and withstanding of the King, and smote the King with leprosie, and he continued a leper to the day of his death, as the Holy Ghost there relates: Why should not all the Lords Bishops, Pastors, and Ministers, prudently, meekly and courageously withstand the office of Lay-chancellors, and their Excommunications, as being corruptions, incroachments, and usurpations; and if the Bishop of* Hereford *say true,* a horrid abuse of the Divine Authority?

And

And mark what a caſe all the Biſhops, yea, and Archbiſhops, and all the Clergy be in, they be all in part degraded, or one principal branch of their office is taken from them, and claimed and exerciſed by an uſurper. Dr. Stillingfleet *will tell you, they are partly cyphers, they are but half-biſhops, and half-paſtors; and all both Clergy and Laity, Rulers and People, are made* Lictores, *a kind of ſervants and bailiffs to a Lay-Chancellor. For he denounces Excommunications in Court, and ſends them* ſtylo imperatorio, in audamus, & firmiter injungendo mandamus, *in a commanding way to the Pariſh-Miniſters and Biſhops to be by them publiſhed; and if they refuſe, he will danger to excommunicate them. And if he do but make a* Significavit *into* Chancery, *that ſuch a one ſtands excommunicate, and intreat the* brachium ſeculare, *the Magiſtrates ſword to come in to the aſſiſtance of the Church, out comes a Writ of* Excommunicato capiendo, *and by virtue thereof the party is taken, and ordered to lye in priſon without bail all his days, except he ſhall reconcile himſelf to the Church by penance, and performing ſuch orders as the Church ſhall make; which Church the Chancellor is. And there lyes no appeal, but from one Chancellor to another.*

And what cauſe is there which the Chancellor may not draw into his Court? for he takes upon him to do all things pro ſalute animæ, & pro reformatione morum, *for the good of the ſoul, and the reforming of mens ways and manners: and it is called the* Spiritual Court; *and a* Spiritual Court *muſt needs have juriſdiction of Spiritual cauſes, and of all ſpiritual cauſes as ſuch that be cognizable by man, and in which there lyes reproof, admonition, and penal Church-cenſure.*

2 *But though all this be not nothing, yet I for my part eſteem it as nothing in compariſon of their horrid and ſcandalous abuſe of Excommunication, with other abuſes; and they are partly neceſſitated to it for the upholding of their Court. For the utmoſt that they can do is but to Excommunicate people; they can neither fine nor impriſon, nor exerciſe any coercive authority. And having no way to compel the obedience of their Orders and Decrees but by Excommunication, therefore do they excommunicate for every thing. So that no body regards them; they have not the leaſt awe upon the conſcience. And for money you may prevent being excommunicated, and get it off when it is denounced. And thus upon the matter the ſame thing is done among us which is done among the* Papiſts, *and which all ſound* Proteſtants *do ſo highly condemn in them, and that is the buying and ſelling of Pardons and Indulgences. Sober* Papiſts *themſelves do grant and maintain that* clave errante *the Popes Excommunications, Pardons and Abſolutions are null. If wicked Prieſts and*

Jeſuits

Jeſuits deceive the people and teach otherwiſe, their ſin be it. Among us Excommunication and Abſolution is made a money-buſineſs. Jugurtha *at his leaving of* Rome *ſaid,* Abi vænalis civitas, mox peritura ſi emptorem invenias. *I would there were not too great ground to ſay it in another caſe.*

But that which is worſe than all the reſt, is that up and down the Nation honeſt ſober people are excommunicated, while the vileſt men are ſpared and countenanced. What is Excommunication? The 33*d. Article of the Church of* England *ſays,* That a perſon rightly excommunicated is cut off from the unity of the Church, and ought to be taken off the whole multitude of the faithful, as an Heathen and Publican, till he be openly reconciled by penance, and received into the Church by a competent Judg. *And Mr.* Rogers *who writes upon the Articles ſays, it is the moſt ſevere and uttermoſt puniſhment, that the viſible Church can inflict upon the wicked and ungodly of this world. This dreadful ſentence and fulmination the Biſhops and their Chancellors make ſo common, it loſes all its force: no man regards it. And God knows they do moſtly denounce it againſt honeſt Miniſters and people for the faithful doing of their duty. I know many faithful Miniſters and people in one Dioceſs excommunicated. Other cauſes are pretended, but the bottom-cauſe is becauſe they are true fearers of God. Pagans have been more kind and civil to Chriſtians, than Chriſtian Biſhops and their Chancellors are to their brethren and fellow Chriſtians,* Act. 28. 30, 31. *I know an honeſt Miniſter ſuſpended and excommunicated by the Biſhop and his Chancellor upon the inſtigation of wicked and Saint-hating men, for the honeſt preaching of Chriſts Gospel freely, at his own charge, in his own houſe, though he read* Common-prayer, *and practiſed Conformity, and broke no law of God or man: and committed no other crime than ſelf denial, charity, uprightneſs and compaſſion to ſouls, in a place where there was great need. The place was conveniently ſituate, decent, moſt fit for a week-day-Lecture, acceptable to all good men, envied only by the Devil and his agents; but becauſe the place was not canonically conſecrate, the Biſhop and his Chancellor being not over-lovers of godlineſs and godly preaching, took occaſion from thence to pick a quarrel with the Preacher, and firſt ſuſpended, and then anathematized him. So that whether men conform or not, if they do but fear God, and ſtretch themſelves prudently, honeſtly, and Chriſtianly to do good, they ſhall be accurſed from Chriſt, and the Kingdom of Heaven, and the communion of the Saints; they ſhall be undone and made uſeleſs in this world; not to ſay damned in the other, as much as in ſome lyes. As I have no uncharitable thought in my breaſt*

againſt

againſt them, but do make it my conſtant work to pray for them; and am conſcious to my ſelf of my ſincerity towards them: and I do pity them, and love and honour all that is good in them, and as it falls in my way ſhall boldly and impartially vindicate them. So neither do I fear them, as knowing that they are but mortal men, and it is not all their wit and greatneſs that will be their defence againſt God and honeſt impartial truth.

If there muſt be a Chancellor or ruling Elder, there ſhould be one in every Pariſh, aſſiſtant to the Paſtor. His forms and proceedings ought to be in the Engliſh *tongue. Condemn not* Papiſts *for having Gods ſervice in the* Latin *Tongue, not underſtood by the people, while you your ſelves do many Church-duties which be a part of Gods ſervice in the* Latin *Tongue alſo. Why ſhould that be vice in others, which is vertue in you? your own mouth will condemn you,* Rom. 2. 1. *There is Church-juſtice, the Chancellor takes upon him to do Church juſtice, which is no ſmall part of Gods ſervice.* Prov. 21. 3. To do juſtice and judgment, is more acceptable to the Lord than ſacrifice *But to do Church-juſtice and judgment in a tongue not underſtood by the people, is diſorderly, and to uſe the words of the Church of* England, *Art.* 24. A thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the cuſtom of the Primitive Church.

That which is the Miniſters rule in teaching, and when he is in the Pulpit, ought to be the Chancellors rule in doing acts of diſcipline and Church-juſtice. To go by any other rule, is to turn from light to darkneſs, Iſa. 8. 28. *and practiſe* Quakeriſm, Popery, *and Church-injuſtice.* What thing ſoever I command thee, obſerve to do it; thou ſhalt not add thereto nor diminiſh from it, *Deut.* 12. 32. As many as walk according to this rule, peace ſhall be upon them, and mercy, *Gal.* 6 16. *I leave not this rule, till you can find a better, and pick ſome flaw or defect in this. To change for the worſe is not good.* Prov. 24. 21. My Son, fear thou the Lord and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change.

There is ſmall or no uſe for Advocates and Proctors for the doing of Church juſtice; nor ſhould any Chriſtian man be compell'd to make uſe of them. But Church-juſtice ſhould be done by the Paſtors of every Pariſh in a plain and ſimple manner, without coſt, without delay, without traveling many miles to a Biſhops Court, without putting perſons to make uſe of Advocates and Proctors beyond their own will. And indeed if things were rightly order'd, civil juſtice ought ſo to be done in every Pariſh, and there ought to be civil and coercive Judges and Magiſtrates in every Pariſh, at leaſt in every Market-Town, to hear and try all civil cauſes; that ſo the people might have juſtice done at their own doors, at all times

ſeaſons,

ſeaſons, and there might be an equal temperament of Magiſtracy and Miniſtry, that we might lead a peaceable and quiet life, in all godlineſs and honeſty. So is Gods word and ſound reaſon, and the true inſtitution of Magiſtracy. Deut. 16. 18. 1 Cor. 6. 5. 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2. 2 Chron. 19. 5, 6, 7. Pſal. 106. 3. *And neither Church juſtice nor civil juſtice ſhould be tied to law forms, quirks, niceties, punctilio's and ceremonies; but as mercy, ſo juſtice alſo is to be prefer'd before ſacrifice, and the life and power, and ſubſtance is not to be made an underling to the ſhadow and form, and dead carcaſs.*

Let not the Chancellor think that he being the Biſhops Deputy is above the Biſhop himſelf; the Biſhop himſelf ought not to uſe lordineſs and imperiouſneſs over the Lords people and brethren, 1 Pet. 5. 3. *In doing Church-juſtice he ought to uſe Church-mildneſs and wiſdom, and not to ſay at every word,* I command you, and we charge you; *as is the conſtant courſe and tenour of their forms and citations. I deny not but a Miniſter may command and charge the people in Gods name; but to do it ordinarily as the Chancellor does, is lordlineſs, and abuſe of authority.* 2 Cor. 10. 8. 1 Cor. 4. 21. *and to uſe it towards the Paſtors, when he himſelf is neither Magiſtrate nor Paſtor, not ſo much as their equal in authority, is not the right way of Church juſtice and diſcipline. Paſtors and the doers of Church juſtice ſhould urge people with the Lords commands, and forbear their own; chuſing rather to imitate* Paul *than the Pope:* Though I might be much bo'd in Chriſt to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for loves ſake I rather beſeech thee, *Phil* 8. 9.

I will add a word more concerning the Presbyterial *ruling Elder, whom I take for ſubſtance to be of the ſame kind and order with the Biſhops Chancellor, neither of them being ordained, nor having any power to baptize, give the Lords-Supper, preach as Paſtors and authorized Officers, ordain Miniſters; but only to rule, and do acts of diſcipline. And I the rather add this, becauſe I ſee there are who at this preſent do ſtiffely ſtand for the* Presbyterial *Government as by Divine right; of which the ruling Elder is one eſſential branch* *; *and to let the world ſee how that Prelacy is Presbytery, and Presbytery is Prelacy, as to this. And that they who oblige themſelves by Oath to extirpate Church-government by the Biſhops Chancellor, and afterwards ſet up a meer ruling-Elder, do ſwear to do and undo the ſame thing, their own mouth and doings will condemn them.*

* A Vindication of the Presbyterial Government, &c. publiſhed by the Miniſters and Elders of a Provincial Aſſembly in *London* *in Nov.* 2. 1649.

There were not that we read of, or is likely in the Church of Philippi *any Elders, beſides Biſhops and Deacons,* Phil. 1. 1. *There was no ruling Elder of that Church who was not a Biſhop alſo,* Act. 20. Paul *in his*

his Travels ſends for the Elders of the Church of Epheſus to come to
ver. 17. who theſe Elders were, he plainly expreſſes, v. 28. they
ſuch as were to take heed to themſelves, and to all the Flock over w
the Holy Ghoſt had made them [Epiſcopous] Biſhops, Paſtors, or o
ſeers, to feed the Church of God. All theſe Elders were co-ordin
and were ordained with the uſual rite of impoſition of hands, Act. 13.
Act. 6. 6. 1 Tim. 5. 22. Tit. 1. 5 1 Tim. 4. 14. There was no
thing in thoſe days as a meer unordained ruling-Elder, ſuch as is the
lates Chancellor, and the Presbyterial ruling Elder. Paul writing
Titus to ordain Elders in every City of Crete, by Elders means Biſh
ſuch as the ordinary Pariſh-Miniſters with us, as is evident by com
ring Tit. 1. 5. with v. 6, 7. So Paul writing to Timothy makes men
only of Biſhops and Deacons, 1 Tim. 3. 1, 2, &c. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, &
and he plainly intimats that the Elderſhip or Presbytery which then was,
the power of Ordination of Miniſters and Impoſition of hands, (wh
the Prelates do not allow to their Chancellor, nor the Presbyterians
their ruling-Elders), 1 Tim. 4. 14. Presbyterium hic collectivum
men eſſe poteſt pro ipſis ſenioribus, Presbyterorum collegis, ſays
Calvin upon the place, and he would have it to be nomen officii;
adds further, Ceremoniam pro ipſo actu ordinationis poſuit.

Peter writing to the Elders of the Churches of the diſperſed Chriſt
Jews, doth plainly intimate that they were all Paſtors and Biſhops
ſouls, as is evident from the words, to an impartial conſiderate Read
1 Pet. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. they were to feed the flock, Epiſcopountes, as
ſtors and Biſhops; which plainly implys that they had authority to do
whole work and office of a Paſtor, as thoſe in Act. 20. 28. So the
thor to the Hebrews makes mention of no other rulers, but ſuch as
watch for their ſouls, and who muſt give account [as thoſe that were
truſted to do the office of a ſpiritual watchman or paſtor to them], Heb.
17. And the Apoſtle reckoning up the divers degrees or orders of Mi
ſters in the Church, names Apoſtles, Prophets, Evangeliſts, Paſtors
Teachers, but ſays nothing of a meer ruling-Elder, Eph. 4. 12, 13.

I do offer theſe further reaſons: To be a Church-ruler is to have
whole office and authority of a Paſtor or Biſhop in Gods Church. As in
Family, he who is the head and ruler, as the Husband, Parent, Maſte
hath authority to do not only acts of Family diſcipline, but all other a
pertaining to the office of him who is ſupream in the Family, Gen. 18.
Deut. 6. 7. Joſh. 24. 15. Job 1. 5. 1 Tim. 3. 4.

So when we ſay a ruler in the Commonwealth, ſupream and ſubordinat
thereby we do ex vi termini aſcribe unto him the whole office of a Judg
politic

political Magistrate, Exod. 22. 28. *So to be a ruler in the Church is the same as to be a Pastor, Bishop, or spiritual over-seer, an authorized officer of Christ, having power to do all Pastoral and Episcopal acts, which be for the good of the flock, and the well government of all the Congregation. When a Minister preacheth, baptizeth, giveth the Lords-Supper, &c. these are all parts of his office, as a Church guide or ruler and spiritual commissioned over seer.*

As for that Scripture, 1 Tim. 5. 17. *which is much vexed to uphold this opinion of the meer ruling-Elder, and is the maineſt Scripture which can be alledged for it: to what hath been said I do add this further. We see it is the ordinary practice of Judges in their circuits, for the more quick and convenient dispatch of business, to divide their work, and one Judg sits in one place or court to hear common-pleas and pleas by* Nisi prius: *and the other Judg sits in another place or court to determine pleas of the Crown, and try prisoners for their lives. Now these Judges are co-ordinate, and have equal power and commission, and do but prudently distribute their work; and it may well be said of them, let the Judges which be faithful be accounted worthy of all honour, especially they who sit upon life and death.*

So when there is a Parliament, the House of Commons appoints several Committees for several matters; may it not well be said, let all the Members of Parliament which be faithful, be counted worthy of all honour, especially they who are appointed to this or that particular Committee, as being a thing of great trust? doth this infer that therefore all the Members in Parliament are not co-ordinate, and have not equal power and authority? So with respect to the Ministry, I will suppose that there are six ordained Elders in the Church of Ephesus, *unto whom* Paul *writes,* Let the Elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. *Doth this prove that there must needs be two sorts or orders of Elders in the Church, one having no power to labour in the word and doctrine, but barely to rule well? no surely; but I will suppose the Pastoral work to be as much as all six can do; and for the convenient doing of it they shall divide their work, and he that is best able, skilful and holy, shall be imployed in that part of the Pastoral office which hath the neareſt tendency to convert and edifie souls, as publick preaching; and the rest may Baptize, Catechise, visit the sick, prepare matters for Discipline, and assist therein; and if they be all of equal parts, gifts and graces, they may preach by turns; and all be compleat Pastors, and have co-ordinate power. And therefore Mr.* Calvin's *comment upon the words,* Quosdam bene & honeste

neſſe præfuiſſe, quibus tamen non erant commiſſæ, docendi partes, *is not ſound. As for his other words well underſtood, I do aſſent to them.* Et ſane ex populo deligebantur graves & probati homines, qui una cum Paſtoribus communi conſilio & authoritate Eccleſiæ diſciplinam adminiſtrarent, ac eſſent quaſi cenſores moribus corrigendis. Hunc morem Ambroſius obſoleviſſe conqueritur Doctorum ignaria, vel potius ſuperbia, dum ſoli volunt eminere. *A ſhadow of theſe* graves & probati homines, *or ruling-Elders, be the Church wardens and Sidemen of every Pariſh, whoſe office is to be* morem cenſores.

But the truth is that all ſides both Independents *and* Presbyterians, *and* Epiſcopal *Divines, ſeem to be much out in this matter, and to be departed from the Scripture pattern, and primitive Apoſtolical ſimplicity. For among us there is a great unperceived want of Miniſters in moſt Congregations, there are not enough to do all the Paſtoral work as it ſhould be done, eſpecially in great Congregations. In the building of* Solomon's *material Temple there were three thouſand and ſix hundred Officers and Overſeers to ſet the people a work,* 1 Chron. 2. 18. *And by Gods direction to his people of old, there were rulers and captains over thouſands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers over the people,* Deut. 1. 15 *But in many a Congregation and Pariſh of* England *conſiſting of thouſands of Families, of a thouſand thouſand people, there is but one ſingle Paſtor or two at moſt to do all the Paſtoral work. So that a great part of the Paſtoral work is omitted, though I believe more might be done by thoſe few that are, than is uſually. And many do rigidly and uncharitably, yea and unfaithfully in part diſcharge themſelves of a great deal of the Paſtoral work by confining their Paſtoral care to thoſe only that are admitted to the Lords Table, thinking it enough barely to preach to the reſt (which I confeſs is a great deal) without any further private overſight, unleſs it be to viſit ſuch of their flock as upon their death beds ſhall ſend for them, to pray by, and inſtruct them then Whereas we ſhould not only teach publickly, but from houſe to houſe,* Act. 20. 20. *Warning every ſoul of our charge* Col. 1. 28. *Pitying them, and being early and late with them as a faithful ſhepherd over his ſheep,* Act. 20. 28, 31. Gen. 31. 40. *Such whoſe age or weakneſs, or multitude of more neceſſary urgent work doth hinder and call off, are excuſed; but that excuſe a great many will hardly have to plead. Becauſe they are not admitted to the Lords Table, are they therefore no Chriſtians? are they no part of your charge? do you allow them in ſome ſort to be ſtated members of your Congregations, and baptize their children, and there leave them without further looking after them, ſave to preach to them, and*

deny

deny them the Sacrament. I do not think it meet to admit to the Lords-Table all whose children I think we may and ought to admit to Baptism. There is a middle state of persons between Infidels or no Christians, and fideles *or compleat visible Christians, such who have very fair and clear right to the Lord's Supper* coram Ecclesiâ; *there are multitudes among us whom we must reckon Christians, and Christen their children, which we may not do to Pagans and gross Heretick's, and notorious branded contumacious ungodly ones; and yet a great many of these whose children we must baptize, may be so bad in their lives, that it would be against charity, and the purity of Gods house and ordinances, & very inconvenient to admit them to the Lords-Supper We must preach to them as unconverted ones, not rigidly censuring them, and counting them meer Pagans, and no Church-members in any degree at all. Such an opinion is more evil and destructive to the Church and souls, than I will now stand to describe. But these faulty and defective Christians we should make a special part of our Pastoral care and oversight both in private and publick, we ought to repute them as* Catechumens, *such as be in the form of learners, and in a state of preparation and beginning towards* fideles *and compleat visible Christians, and Communicants, such of them as be more than ordinary, carnal, or scandalous, we ought publickly to admonish. Now many Divines both Antiepiscopal and Episcopal, do too much cast off the care of these. And one cause is the paucity of Ministers; and yet a great many rulers, pastors and people, think there are too many: (there may be too many bad Ministers, but not too many good ones); and the pride, and selfishness, and covetousness of many Pastors, will not suffer them to have assistants.*

Now in the Primitive Churches there was more than one Pastor to a congregation. According to the greatness or smallness of the congregation, they had more or fewer Pastors and Deacons. To the Church at Jerusalem *consisting of about five thousand,* Act. 4 4. *there were by order of the Apostles chosen seven men to be Deacons,* Act. 6. 3. *and the twelve Apostles gave themselves continually to prayer, and to the Ministry of the word* v. 4.

The number of Eders and Ministers among us is not equal to theirs by much, especially in great Parishes.

It is therefore my judgment that there should be a sufficient number of ordained Elders in every Parish and congregation to do the whole Pastoral work. Not that there should be one sort of meer ruling-Elders, ordained or not ordained barely to rule, and not to teach, baptize, give the Lords-supper, &c. *I am for none such; but I would have them all to be ordain-*

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ed to the ſame work and office, to be co ordinate, to be Biſhops, guides and rulers in Gods Church, allowing to each one a difference of eſteem according to the difference of holineſs, wiſdom, uſefulneſs and excellency which God hath put upon him, and prudently to diſtribute their work. And if the Univerſities will not afford a ſufficient number, choice ſhould be made of the more judicious and intelligent ſort of Auditors, who are ſupra fidelium vulgus, *of which there are ſome in moſt congregations, to be Paſtors and aſſiſtants to thoſe that are choſen out of the Univerſities. I know this will diſpleaſe the Univerſities and thoſe that be all for Univerſity men. But as I do honour the Univerſities and Learning, and learned men, and would have all the Paſtors to be learned and able Scholars as much as may be; ſo I do honour holineſs and piety, and reſpect the good of ſouls, and the intereſt of all the Churches. And Univerſities and Univerſity-men muſt deny themſelves, and take up their croſs daily, if they will be Univerſities and Diſciples of Chriſt,* Luk. 9. 23.

And whoever ſhall impartially read the Scriptures, and the writings of the ancients, and ſhall conſider the ſtate of thoſe times, will find that the generality of the Primitive Biſhops, Paſtors and Miniſters, had no more learning and academical education than the more intelligent, and judicious, and grave, and experienced of the faithful among us, and many of them not ſo much. And I muſt needs ſay it were far better for the Churches to be ſerved by Miniſters, Paſtors and Biſhops choſen from among the faithful in our Congregations and Pariſhes, being ſupra fidelium vulgus, *competently knowing, conſcientious, holy,* &c. *as many private Chriſtians are, than by graceleſs wits and unſanctified Academical Doctors and Students in* Plato *and* Ariſtotle, *and in Arts and Sciences, who are a plague to the Churches a great many of them, and very unfit to be Chriſtian Biſhops, Paſtors and Divines. True Philoſophy is true Chriſtianity; and to be a right Logician is rightly to uſe the reaſon which God hath given us; and they which ſtudy and teach any other Morality than what is contained in thoſe three, the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghoſt, teach another Goſpel, and ſubvert the Chriſtian Religion, and feign a ſort of graces and virtues which are but as a carcaſs without life, and a body without a ſoul. To ſtudy Phyſicks is to ſtudy to know God in all his works. Divinity is practical. And all Learning and Science is to be ſubſervient to true godlineſs, and this ought to be the firſt and laſt in all our ſtudies. For of God, and through God, and to God are all things.*

I have much exceeded my thoughts and intentions in the length, and alſo as to the matter of this advertiſement and præmonition to the Reader.

The

The ſubject matter, together with the diſeaſe of theſe times, calls for it.

I have one thing more to advertiſe touching the office of the Chanceller, leſt any one ſhould take occaſion to deſpiſe or contemn authority, and run into any hurtful extreams.

I do plainly think as I have here expreſſed, that the office of the Chancellor is anomolous *and illegal as to the very being and conſtitution of it; but it is the abuſe of it which I do chiefly tax. I have no ſuch zeal for the act of Ordination by man, but that if the chief Magiſtrate ſhall commiſſion a worthy man to the office of the Miniſtry without any Ordination at all by Biſhops or Paſtors, I ſhould be loath to think ſuch a Miniſter no Miniſter, and his miniſterial acts null; and that if he do his office faithfully, God would not bleſs and own it. King* Solomon *depoſed* Abiathar *from being Prieſt; and he that hath authority to depoſe, if he ſhall ordain and authorize a new one in the room of him that is for his faults put out, I am not he that ſhall gainſay his authority therein. And yet where Ordination by Biſhops and Presbyters may be had, it ought to be had, and is moſt regular. Alſo if the chief Magiſtrate and the State ſhall conſult and make a law to devide the Paſtors office, which ſhould be intire, into parts; and ſhall appoint one man to baptize, and to do no more, another to preach and give the Lords-ſupper, and no more, another to excommunicate and do acts of diſcipline, and no more; I will neither approve this as orderly and regular, nor will I be contentious and unpeaceable, but I will obey in all things not ſimply unlawful, rather than be unpeaceable, and cauſe worſe effects and inconveniencies. An inferiour or ſubject may do a thing commanded, which a ſuperiour may not command. But the Chancellors abuſe of Diſcipline and Excommunication, is groſs. If ſubjects ſhould abuſe the King and Parliament or the office of the great ſeal, as Chanellors do abuſe the Lords Diſcipline and Ordinance of Excommunication, I wot what would become of them. But the day of judgment will ſet all things ſtraight. Look what hanging and capital puniſhment is in the Commonwealth, that is Excommunication in the Church. And look as the ſoul is more precious than the body, and hell is more terrible than death, ſo right Excommunication which is the ſentence of damnation upon the ſoul, ought to be dreaded by every wiſe man, more than death, which doth but deſtroy the outward man. He therefore that doth wrongfully Excommunicate another doth in ſome reſpects before God commit a greater crime, than if he ſhould wrongfully murder a man: I ſay in ſome reſpects. I do not mean it in all. And as he that doth abuſe the greater, doth virtually and implicitely abuſe the leſs; ſo by conſequence he that doth abuſe the ordinance of Excommunica-*

tion, which is the utmost authority and penalty in the Church, doth virtually abuse the whole office of the Ministry. And as he which makes void the penal and threatning part of the Law, doth in eodem signo rationis *make void the præmiant and promissory part of the Law, or else he is grosly partial; and in so doing doth make void the law it self; so consequently he who doth by horrible abuse make void and evacuate the force of Excommunication, doth make void and evacuate the force of absolution, and in doing that doth virtually and includedly what in him lyes make void the whole office and ministry of man in the Church, as baptizing, teaching, giving the Lords Supper, Ordination of Ministers, and all Pastoral and Episcopal acts; and brings the sacred office into mockery, scorn and contempt; and consequently commits a common scandal, destructive to the Churches and the souls of men, and a crime worthy to be punished by the Magistrate, and worthy of Excommunication by the Guides and Pastors of the Church.*

I have this one word more to add, that though private Christians be not authorized Ministers, yet where God doth bless them with wisdom and holiness, and gifts, and graces competent for a Minister; and the Church doth need their help, as it doth, they would do well (having no just reasons to excuse them) to procure themselves to be Ordained into the Ministry; and all pious right aiming Ministers will be very forward to make the best and utmost use of the gifts and graces of their people. And if all Ministers should but make due use of the judicious, and grave, and intelligent ones of their flock, it would be a means of preventing Schism, and gathering and setting up anti-Churches, and it would be an ease to Pastors, and exercise and try the abilities of their people; and when they feel their understandings and parts matched, they would learn by experience to be humble, and to have mean thoughts of themselves, and to have more reverence for their Seniors and betters.

As I do not doubt but many called gifted Brethren have gone too far on one hand, and presumed above their abilities, and without just warrant have invaded the office of the Ministry, and run before they have been sent, and been the authors and causes of much Schism, and of many breaches and evils in the Church, through their self-conceitedness, and Corah *like affectation to be rulers and dominators in the Church; and to be cried up for their parts and gifts, and seeming skill in the Ministry. So I do not doubt but that many good men and godly Ministers have gone too far the other way, and have failed to make due use of the gifts and graces of their people, and thereby have occasioned some of their hearers to turn from them, and set up anti-Churches, out in zeal against the*

pride

pride of ſome called gifted Brethren, have undervalued and kept under the gifts and abilities of many honeſt, judicious, and ſober Chriſtians, who might have been very uſeful and aſſiſtant to them in the Miniſtry, and in guiding and over-ſeeing their flocks; and have wanted ſomething of Moſes *ſpirit,* Would God all the Lords people were Prophets. *It ſhould rejoice Miniſters to have their hearers ſo knowing, holy and experienced, as to be able to be teachers themſelves, yea and to teach their Teachers. The more knowing and able that they are, they will be the more humble. They do greatly err which look all at bare authority in a Miniſter; and they do as greatly err that deſpiſe authority, and look all at gifts and graces. Though private Chriſtians be not anthorized Miniſters, there lyes upon them beſides the care of their own Families, great duty to love and to do good to others, and to be uſeful and helpful in viſiting the ſick, admoniſhing, exhorting, counſelling, and other ways, many too long to be here inſiſted on, or ſo much as named by me.*

ROM. I. 14, 15.

I am debtor both to the Greeks, *and to the* Barbarians: *both to the wise, and to the unwise.*

So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome *also.*

SOME alterations and changes befalling me, have compelled me for the present to alter my Text; not for my self, but for your sakes and the truth. The sequel of the Discourse will give you to understand my reasons.

The words now read are the words of blessed *Paul* to the Christians at *Rome*, and have in them these notable parts:

1. An acknowledgment of himself to be debtor, *I am debtor.*

2. The parties to whom he was debtor, *both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise*; which distribution takes in all sorts indefinitely, excepting none.

3. The debt which he owed to them, which is partly expressed, and partly implied; partly expressed, and that is the preaching of the Gospel; and partly implied, and that is love and care for their souls, and as a fruit or expression thereof, preaching the Gospel.

4. Here is the profession of his sincerity and readiness to discharge and pay this debt, *I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also.*

5. Here is a necessary caution or limitation put in, *as much as in me is*; that is, I acknowledg my self debtor to you at *Rome*, but not to you only, I owe the like debt to many others which I do to you; I am debtor to all, the *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, *the wise and the unwise*; *as much as in me lyes, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you at Rome also*; that is, there is nothing shall keep me from preaching to you but meer conscience, and invincible reasons from duty and necessity, that I cannot avoid.

6. Here is to be noted the great ardour and zeal of the Apostle, implied in the Text, and all along in the precedent verses, and particularly expressed, *Vers.* 11. *I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift*; as also his great humility, acknowledging himself their debtor; as also his earnest care, and the vastness of his love for all the Churches of Christ, that which he elsewhere expresses of himself, besides all his personal labours, sorrows, sufferings, and

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temptations, thoſe things that are without, *that which comes upon me daily, the care of all the Churches*, 2 Cor. 11. 28.

7. Laſtly, here is limited the Apoſtles fidelity and exactneſs in the diſcharge of all this debt and duty in this adverb *ſo*; which is not a bare word of conſtruction to render the ſenſe more coherent, but takes in both the matter and manner of performance: I acknowledg my ſelf debtor to all; and juſt as my debt is, my whole man and the ſenſe of my whole man to all the Churches of Chriſt with all poſſible ſincerity, diligence, and zeal; even ſo as much as in me lyes I am ready to diſcharge this debt, to preach this Goſpel to all, the wiſe and the unwiſe, and particularly to you that are at *Rome* alſo.

Doct. *A Miniſter of the Goſpel is debtor to all, as much as in him lyes, to preach the Goſpel to all, that is to as many as he can.*

There is none can doubt of the juſt collection of this Doctrine from the words, except it be for this one reaſon, That the Apoſtle was an extraordinary Miniſter of the Church, and had a more large extenſive commiſſion than ordinary Miniſters have, and ſo it may be thought there lay that debt upon him which doth not lye upon us.

I ſhall anſwer ſuch by the Apoſtle himſelf, *Phil.* 4. 9, *Thoſe things which ye have both learned and received, and heard, and ſeen in me, do, and the God of peace ſhall be with you.* 1 Cor. 11. 1, *Be ye followers of me even as I alſo am of Chriſt.* The Apoſtle in this is an imitable example to all Chriſts Miniſters to the worlds end. But I ſhall clear this by familiar proofs and reaſons.

A Miniſter of Chriſt ſuſtains, as I may ſay, a double capacity, or ſtands in a double relation to the whole Church. 1. As a Chriſtian: 2. As a Miniſter.

1. As a Chriſtian, he ſtands related to Chriſt and to his Church univerſal; and this is common to him with all other Chriſtian people. We are not Chriſtians in this or that place only, or among this or that people, but we are Chriſtians in all places where we come. As a man is a man in any part of the world, or a Chriſtian man is a Chriſtian man in all places, in the remoteſt parts of the earth; and he is to carry himſelf like a Chriſtian, both towards God and towards man, both toward the wiſe and the unwiſe, *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, bond and free. Now we are related to Chriſts Church, not barely as Chriſtians, but as Miniſters alſo; or rather we are Chriſtian Miniſters, to the wiſe and to the unwiſe, to all people, and nations, and languages where we ſhall be called, and God ſhall give us opportunity, capacity and ability to preach the Goſpel. I do eaſily grant that we may have tye

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and a more ſpecial relation to this or that particular people or Congregation: but this particular relation to a particular people and Congregation is but reſpective, limited and ſubſervient to our general duty to the Church univerſal.

Now there is a twofold debt incumbent upon each Miniſter of Chriſt as he is a Chriſtian Miniſter to the Church univerſal. 1. The debt of love and good will. 2. The debt of benificence and good doing. We owe to all this grand debt of love and good-will, *Rom.* 13. 8, *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another.* Love is both the leaſt and the greateſt debt we can owe to any: 1. It is the leaſt, we can do no leſs than love another, and wiſh him well, that God may bleſs his ſoul, that he may be ſaved in the day of the Lord; love is the lighteſt and cheapeſt thing of any. Love ſhould be as common as men. Every man is to be loved with a love of complacency ſo far as he is lovely, and participates of the Image of God; and with a love of benevolence and good-will, ſo far as he is wanting, and needs help, and is within our reach to help. Though we cannot help him outwardly, we may love him inwardly. Though I cannot do good to all the Churches of Chriſt upon earth, I may have love and good-will in my heart towards them. Though I cannot preach to all the Kingdoms in the world, that is impoſſible, yet I may wiſh & long in my heart that they all had the Goſpel and Preaching. Though I cannot relieve all the needy people in a Town or Pariſh, I may have inward charity to them all, and outwardly relieve as many as I can. Love is the leaſt and loweſt thing we can poſſibly owe and do to any. The pooreſt beggar owes this and may pay it as well as the greateſt King; and where ever there is a man in the world, he owes this debt of love and good-will to all other men. 2. As this is the leaſt and loweſt debt, ſo it is the greateſt we can owe and pay to any man. For love is the fulfilling of the Law; all the Law is comprehended in this one ſaying, *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf*, Rom. 13. 8, 9. Though you do never ſo much good outwardly to another, and have not love and charity, it is nothing; though you give all your goods to the poor, and build Almhouſes, and do never ſo many excellent works, and be void of ſincere Chriſtian charity, it is all but as a ſounding braſs, and tinkling cymbal, 1 *Cor.* 13. Love is more weighty and maſſie than Gold, it is as ſtrong as death. *God is love, and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God*, 1 Joh. 4. 16. Love another, and in that meaſure that you love him, you will do him no hurt at all, you will do him all the good you can. This debt of love and good-will is incumbent upon all.

2. But that is not all, for we owe beneficence and doing good to all; we owe all the good we can to mens bodies and ſouls, *Gal.* 6. 10. *Do good unto all men, eſpecially to them which are of the houſhold of faith.* I hope you will not think that it is the duty of all but Miniſters to do good to all; you find no ſuch thing in the Text; and in all reaſon we ſhould rather be patterns to others of doing good, and not come behind any in ſo excellent a piece of Religion as doing good. And I hope none will ſay, but that preaching of the Goſpel in it ſelf is a good work; I am ſure it is a greater good in it ſelf, and as ſuch to ſouls, than if I ſhould diſtribute all my eſtate upon needy perſons to relieve their bodies. If Heaven and everlaſting Salvation be good, their preaching the Goſpel is good. *For faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God; and how can they hear without a preacher? and how can they preach except they be ſent?* Rom. 10. 14, 15, 16, 17. Thoſe that cry out againſt preaching, and by their leave and good-will there ſhould either be no preaching, or as little as might be, they do but ſpeak the language of Hell and the Devil, and are combined with him in a league to undermine the honour, the Kingdom, the intereſt of God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt and the ſalvation of ſouls. What are thoſe good works which theſe Satanical haters of goodneſs would have us to do? Is it ſo great a good to do good to mens bodies? and is it not as great and greater to do good to mens ſouls? Is an alms for the body commendable? and is an alms for the ſoul diſgrace and damage? Do we owe all the good and beneficence we can to the outward mortal and carnal part, and not much more all the good we can to the moſt noble immortal and precious part of man? ſuch reaſons and objections from Infidels and Epicures might be better excuſable: but from the mouths of Chriſtians they are loathſome and abominable, and God will make all ſuch to know, that preaching the Goſpel in ſincerity to ſave ſouls, is the greateſt outward good, and doing good, that can be in this world. If it were not, it would not be ſo much hated and oppoſed by all, as we ſee it is. Well, I have ſhewed you that there is this twofold debt incumbent upon all Chriſts Miniſters, as much as in us lyes to all. 1. The debt of love and good-will to all. 2. The debt of doing good, particularly and eſpecially of preaching the Goſpel. Though this is very clear of it ſelf, yet for further clearneſs I ſhall confirm it by theſe following proofs and reaſons.

R. 1. We are to do thus in imitation of God who is good and doth good, and that to all. *Pſal.* 119. 68, *Thou art good, and doſt good.* And *Pſal.* 145. 9, *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are*

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over all his works. And we are commanded to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect, who maketh his Sun to shine upon all, *Mat.* 5. 45, 48.

R. 2. In imitation of Jesus Christ, *Act.* 10 38, *Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil, for God was with him.* You may read of his Travels from place to place preaching in all the Synagogues and Villages of *Judea*, *Mar.* 1 37 38, 39, *And Simon and they that were with him followed after him, and when they had found him, they said unto him, all men seek for thee. And he said unto them, let us go into the next Towns, that I may preach there also, for therefore came I forth. And he preached in their Synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out Devils* And *Mar.* 2 1, 2, *And again he entred into Capernaum after some days, and it was noised that he was in the house, and straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no not so much as about the door; and he preached the word unto them* Mat. 9. 35, 36, 37, 38 *And Jesus went about all the Cities and Villages, teaching in their Synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his Disciples, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.* They flocked after him out of all places. There were gathered together at one time five thousand men besides women and children, and he made them all to sit down on the grass, and fed them miraculously with five loaves and two fishes, *Mat.* 14. 15. And another time they followed him three days together hearing him preach the Gospel; and having nothing to eat, he had compassion on them, and would not send them away fasting, lest they should faint in the way; and therefore by a miracle of seven loaves and a few little fishes he fed four thousand besides women and children, *Mat.* 15. 32. This was in the open air upon the green-grass. Would you not have us to be imitators of Christ? why else are we called Christians? Can we be so much for preaching as he was, preaching in a Mountain, preaching out of a Ship by the Sea-shore, preaching in private houses, people thronging to hear him, and coming out of all places and from all parts by hundreds and by thousands, and following him from day to day? He was so intent upon preaching, that they could not so much as eat bread; And so that his friends hearing of it, they went out to lay hold on him;

him; for they ſaid, *He is beſides himſelf*, Mar. 3. 20, 21. I know Chriſt was an extraordinary Preacher; but doubtleſs he is in all this our pattern for preaching and doing all the good that poſſibly we can. And people have ſouls now as well as then, and we are bound to all care for them now as they were then. And Chriſt meant not to tarry always upon earth, and preach in perſon to all. He preacheth to us by his Spirit and Miniſters now; and he that refuſeth to hear theſe, refuſeth to hear him.

R. 3. We are to be thus intent upon Preaching in imitation of the bleſſed Apoſtles, and the firſt and primeſt Miniſters of Chriſt, *Rom.* 15. 19, *From Jeruſalem and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Goſpel of Chriſt.* Col. 1. 28, *Warning every man, and teaching every man in all wiſdom, that we may preſent every man perfect in Chriſt.* Act. 8. 4, *They that were ſcattered abroad went every where preaching the word.* O how abundant and unwearied was the Apoſtle *Paul* in preaching the Goſpel, and ſo all the Apoſtles, going from place to place, up and down the world to preach and ſpread the Goſpel. So aſſiduous and painful were they in the work of God, that they alſo were thought to be beſides themſelves, and were put to anſwer for themſelves, *If we be beſides our ſelves it is to God*, 2 Cor. 5. 13. They would not to ſerve the poor, ſuffer themſelves to be called off from preaching the Goſpel; but the poor being ſupernumerary, they appointed the Office of Deacons to ſee to them: but ſay they, *We will give our ſelves continually to prayer, and to the miniſtry of the Word*, Act. 7. 2, 3, 4.

R. 4. I may argue from the general Commiſſion of Jeſus Chriſt at his leaving the world, to his Apoſtles firſtly and primarily, but not ſolely, but alſo to all Goſpel Miniſters to the end of the world, *Mat.* 28. 18, 19, 20, *Go and teach all Nations, baptizing them*, &c. *and lo I am with you even unto the end of the world.* Mar. 16. 15, 16, *Go ye into all the world and preach the Goſpel to every creature*; that is to every man and woman under Heaven. You will ſay, theſe are not commands for our times. Are they not? where do you find any exception of times or places? theſe commands are commands now, and they are obliging upon all to the uttermoſt of our power in our ſeveral places, the ſetting up of the Name and Kingdom of God in all the world by the preaching of the Goſpel. And I do not doubt but that it lyes as a heavy ſin upon the Chriſtian World, that no more is done by Chriſtian Kings, States, and Governments, and others in their places, towards the diſperſing of the Goſpel over all the known world.

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Though we cannot preach the Goſpel to all, yet a command ſtands upon record in Chriſts Goſpel, obliging all in their places to wiſh and endeavour to the utmoſt of our power, and a promiſe to encourage us in all juſt endeavours; and thoſe are as truly in force now as ever.

R. 5. And what is this but according to our daily prayers? *Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is done in Heaven?* Do not all Chriſtian people pray theſe prayers? Is it not then hypocriſie to pray that the Goſpel may be preached up and down the world, and to ſpeak againſt, and oppoſe the preaching of it among our ſelves in moſt needy places? how ſhall Gods name be hallowed, how ſhall his Kingdom be ſet up, and the Kingdom of the Devil and darkneſs, and ungodlineſs, thrown down, but by the Word and Goſpel of Chriſt? And how can they have this Goſpel without ſome one to bring it them? and who are appointed to bring it them but Preachers? as the Apoſtle argues, *How can they hear without a Preacher?* doth not this ſhew the wretchedneſs and hypocriſie of many among us, which pray theſe prayers, and groſly oppoſe the preaching of the Goſpel?

R. 6. Moreover, what ſays bleſſed *Paul*? *Phil.* 1 15, 16, 17, 18, *Some indeed preach Chriſt even of envy and ſtrife, and ſome of good-will. The one preach Chriſt of contention, not ſincerely, ſuppoſing to add affliction to my bonds: but the other of love, knowing that I am ſet for the defence of the Goſpel.* What then? *Notwithſtanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Chriſt is preached, and I therein do rejoice, and will rejoice.* Are not thoſe wicked wretches which envy the ſincere preaching of the Goſpel? What? do they know our hearts better than we our ſelves? That's the cuſtom of hypocrites and malignant wretches, when they can charge no fault outwardly, they take upon them to know our hearts, and condemn us of hypocriſie, and corrupt ſelf-ends. Had they pure zeal for the glory of God, and the good of ſouls, they would rejoice with bleſſed *Paul* when the Goſpel is preached, though out of envy and ſtrife: but becauſe they fret and rage, and do all they can to get the Goſpel down, when it is preached ſincerely and faithfully, that doth prove beyond all denial that they are plainly acted by a Satanical, God-hating ſpirit, and are full of envy and wrath, and malignant nature, that are grieved at the heart like the adverſaries of *Jeruſalem*, when any one comes forth from the Lord that ſeeks the welfare of ſouls. *Nehem.* 2. 10, *When Sanballat and Tobia heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a*

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man to ſeek the welfare of the children of Iſrael. So do envious wicked Paſtors and people, rulers and ruled, *ſet themſelves againſt the Lord and againſt his anointed*; as you may read in *Pſal.* 2. throughout.

R 7. I may argue from the words of a Miniſters Ordination. Biſhops themſelves when they ordain Miniſters, they ordain them to no one place; they ordain Miniſters, inveſting them with power and authority from Jeſus Chriſt to preach the Goſpel; they limit them to no place or people at all, and they tye them out from none. By the words of Ordination we have licenſe and authority even from ordaining Biſhops themſelves to preach the Goſpel in any place to any people, where we ſhall be duly called.

R. 8. I may argue from the Apoſtles words, 2 *Tim.* 4. 1, 2, *I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judg the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his Kingdom: preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long ſuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure ſound doctrine, but after their own luſts ſhall they heap to themſelves teachers having itching ears.* What man on earth ſhall exempt us from the obedience of this charge and command of God, *preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon*; that is at all times, in all places, and to all perſons where we can perceive we have juſt call and reaſons to preach (of which more anon.)? And 1 *Cor.* 9 16. *A neceſſity is laid upon me, yea wo is unto me if I preach not the Goſpel.* Shall God threaten wo to us if we preach not the Goſpel, and ſhall we fear the threats of men more than God? *Jer.* 1. 17. *Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and ariſe and ſpeak unto them all that I command thee: be not diſmayed at their faces, leſt I confound thee before them.*

R. 9. I may argue from the Law of nature and humane ſociety; the intereſt of particular Churches and Societies is bound up in the intereſt of the Church univerſal, as the welfare of this and other particular Towns is bound up in the welfare of all the Kingdom; and every particular officer in the Commonwealth is bound as he is a member of the Commonwealth, to endeavour the good and conſervation of the whole. As in the body natural the eye is not for it ſelf, nor the hand, nor the foot; but every member bears a relation to the head and to the whole body, and to each particular member: So every Chriſtian man and Chriſtian Miniſter doth bear a relation to Jeſus Chriſt the head, and to his body the Church univerſal, and he owes the utmoſt ſervice that poſſible he can to the whole body, or elſe he is guilty ſo far of Schiſm from the body, and is uncharitable and ſelfiſh, and

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drives on a partial, narrow and self-seeking design of his own, and doth not sincerely seek the glory of God, and the things of Jesus Christ.

R. 10. All the difficulty lyes in comparing circumstances, and weighing all things to be considered, and seeing to our selves that we do all to the glory of God, and to the good of Christs Church, and that we do nothing against the rules of piety, equity, and charity, and that we never preach and pray when preaching and praying will likely do more hurt than good.

Obj. 1. As for preaching in such a place as this, let the Gospel be preached, and souls instructed, and Gods work done, and let them chuse what place they will. It is gross hypocrisie to be for places against the glory of God, and the Salvation of souls, and the substantial duties of piety, mercy and obedience, and to be more for the holiness of places than of persons. As Christ saith of the Sabbath, *the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath:* So places were made for men, and not men for places. In all places God hath promised where he records his name, he will meet his people, and bless them, *Exod.* 20. 24 Now God doth chiefly record his name inwardly in the hearts of his people, and they are his spiritual temple. And as for outward places, God will have mercy rather than sacrifice; and where God doth call his Ministers to preach, and his people to meet and hear, there he doth (*pro tempore*, for the time) record his name, and there Christian souls may expect his blessing; where two or three are gathered together in Christs name, there he is in the midst of them, *Mat* 18. 20. It is not the place which hallows the people, but it is the Minister, the people, and the exercise which doth hallow the place, *Gen.* 28 16, 17, *And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, how dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.* A hungry soul would be glad of spiritual food in a worse place than this. Our blessed Saviour preached in the open fields, in a mountain by the Sea side, in private houses. Blessed *Mary* sat at his feet hearing his word in a private house, *Luk* 10. 38, *&c.* And *Peter* preached to *Cornelius* and his Kinsmen gathered together privately, and the Holy Ghost fell on them all, *Act.* 10. 24, 33, 44, To say that there are publick places more convenient to preach in, is but equivocation, and no better than deceit and untruth; and it is all one as if you should bind a mans

legs, and then bid him run: or bid a man eat, and take the meat from him, or ſet it out of his reach.

If men will not ſuffer us to preach in the proper and uſual place, and ſhall blame and ſlander, and puniſh us for preaching in ſuch places as theſe, and think that for place ſake we ſhould forbear a moſt godly and profitable duty, if there be an offence committed, it is they and not we who are guilty. We do but do our duty, preferring mercy before ſacrifice, and ſerving God before men and places.

Obj. 2. If any ſhall ask, *What have I to do to preach in anothers charge againſt his will?*

This is anſwered before. If my next neighbours houſe be on fire, and I eſpy it and tell him of it, and endeavour to ſave the houſe and all in it from being burnt, can he blame me for this, and ſay, what authority have you to meddle with me and mine? Or if a neighbour-Town have the plague in it, and we of this Town take pity upon them, and ſend them relief, and help them all we can, will any be ſo perverſe as to refuſe our help, and ſay you have nothing to do to relieve us? Or if as I go up and down the ſtreets, I meet with a poor Lazar full of ſores and botches, and offer him an alms of a 4 *d.* or 6 *d.* ſhall he be ſo perverſe and proud as to refuſe it, and ſay, you have no authority to relieve me, I ſcorn your alms and charity?

If men were God, we ought to pleaſe them as God; but being they are but men, we are to regard them but as men; and if any ſhall take offence where no offence is given, they muſt blame themſelves, and not expect that we ſhould fear and obſerve them more than God, and deny compaſſion to ſouls becauſe they are offended.

Two points more I ſhall deduce and open: 1. We are not to ſuſpend our ſelves from Preaching becauſe we want a Biſhops Licenſe. 2. We are not to ſuſpend our ſelves from Preaching where we have a due call.

1. We are not to ſuſpend our ſelves from Preaching for want of a Biſhops Licenſe: For Jeſus Chriſt is the ſupream Biſhop and Shepherd of ſouls; and all Biſhops, Paſtors and Miniſters be under him; and you ſee by the words of my Text, we are debtors to all, and it is not the Biſhop that can diſoblige us from this debt: We are the commiſſioned Officers and Stewards of Jeſus Chriſt, all of us in relation to the Church univerſal, and no one Biſhop or Paſtor can claim ſtate and ſuperiority over another againſt the rules of charity, humility, and right order. Every Paſtor is a Biſhop

of

of Souls. A Paſtor, a Biſhop, and an Overſeer of Souls, are but three names for the ſame thing. If I were a meer ſtranger and ſhould come into this Town to ſojourn, and ſhould ſee a fire begun in any houſe, muſt I forbear to give notice of it without a licenſe from ſome one that hath authority? what if he be not at home? what if he live a great way off? what if he be drunk and not fit to be ſpoke with? what if he be proud and malicious, and lordly, and will not give a licenſe? muſt all the Town be burnt becauſe of him? If I ſee a company of needy beggars and hungry famiſhed perſons, muſt I go for a Biſhops licenſe to relieve theſe people before I can do it? muſt I preach no where but juſt where the Biſhop ſaith I muſt? Is he God and Jeſus Chriſt? Is he my Lawmaker, and muſt he be my Judg? He is a man, and he is a Miniſter as I am, and I am a Miniſter as he is; I have power to preach the Goſpel as well as he, and he hath power to preach the Goſpel no more than I. Muſt ſouls be left to ſink or ſwim becauſe one that is called Biſhop, that lives a great many miles off, threatens what he will do againſt us? If the Pope of *Rome* ſhall take upon him to be Biſhop of all the world, and ſhall forbid all to preach the Goſpel that have not a licenſe and deputation from him, muſt we obey him? If the Archbiſhop of *York* or *Canterbury* ſhall take himſelf to be Biſhop of all the Souls within *England*, and ſhall command all Preachers and people that they ſhall not preach nor hear the Goſpel without a licenſe from him, muſt we obey him? And if the Biſhop of this Dioceſs think himſelf able to do the work of a Scripture-Biſhop and Paſtor to thouſands and millions of ſouls which he never ſaw, nor is like to ſee, ſo as a Biſhop ſhould, they being in vaſt remote parts from him, and ſhall interdict and forbid us all from preaching and hearing without his licenſe, ſhall we obey him? obey him who will, for by the Grace of God I mean to preach the Goſpel, let them all do their utmoſt. To be a Biſhop is to be an Overſeer of Souls; to overſee Souls is to feed them by knowledg and underſtanding, to preach Gods Word to them, to Baptize and give the Lords-Supper, to viſit the ſick, to teach them publickly, and from houſe to houſe, to watch over every ſoul; and if they will take upon them an impoſſible work, ſuch as no one man, nor two, nor twenty, nor a hundred can do, that is, to be a Biſhop and Paſtor to multitudes of Pariſhes that live at a vaſt diſtance from them, and ſhall engroſs into their hands the whole Paſtoral office, work and authority, over many and great Coun-

ties, and think to do it by Deputies and men of their own liking: and forbid against all reaſon and conſcience upright faithful men from preaching the Goſpel of Chriſt upon worldly and ſelfiſh reaſons, let who will obey their orders and decrees, for I will be ſo far from obeying them, that I will deteſt them; and as I ſhall have due call, and it ſhall come in my way, I will preach againſt them, and warn all Chriſtian people to beware of all ſuch as wolves and deſtroyers of the ſheep and flock of Chriſt; they are tyrants and no ſhepherds; they lord it over Gods heritage, and would be obeyed before God and Jeſus Chriſt. I know where I ſpeak it, and before whom, and I hope to own it before God at the day of Judgment, where I think a great many of them will never be able to ſhew their face. And as for ſuch as ſhall condemn me for raſhneſs and indiſcreet zeal, let them cenſure me, and call me what they pleaſe; I had rather that, than God and conſcience condemn me for a partial and perfidious traytor to his truth and cauſe. I am a Miniſter of Chriſt, and a Biſhop of Souls, and am debtor to the wiſe and to the unwiſe, to all as many as I can; and I have a licenſe, power and commiſſion from Jeſus Chriſt by the Ordination of Biſhops and Miniſters to whom it pertains to ordain; and this ſhall ſuffice to me to preach the Goſpel in all places, and to all people where I have due call. No other licenſe do I need. What may be done for peace-ſake I ſhall not ſay; but as to authority and licenſe to preach, I am ſure there needs no more. Any other licenſe is diſorderly and ſuperfluous, and is but a device to get money, and enſnare honeſt men, and humour pride and ſelf-will

2. We are not to ſuſpend our ſelves from Preaching where we have due call. If we preach without due call from God, wo be to us: and if we preach by due call from God, wo be to them that would debar us. If God call and command, I will, I am ſure I ought to obey, let men command what they pleaſe. I do not mean by a due call from God, Enthuſiaſtical dreams and fictions, and meer imaginations: but by a due call from God, I mean where all things conſidered, the reaſons for Preaching are ſtronger than the reaſons for not Preaching in the judgment of an upright, wiſe and impartial conſcience: more particularly, I ſhall tell you what is not, and what is a due call to preach the Goſpel. 1. We may not preach the Goſpel when we will. 2. We may not preach the Goſpel where we will.

1. We may not preach the Goſpel when we will. Though the Scripture

ture bids us preach the Word, *be inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon*, yet there are ſeaſons when it would be ſinful to preach the Goſpel; as for a Miniſter ordinarily to aſſemble his people at midnight to hear the Word, no neceſſity enforcing, it would be ſinful. Every thing is good in its ſeaſon. To make every day a Preaching day like the Lords-day, may not be; neither Preachers nor people could away with it, it would turn all Religion into meer Preaching and hearing, and would ſoon overturn it ſelf.

2. We may not preach the Goſpel where we will. Though Preaching in it ſelf be neither better nor worſe by the place, yet for a Miniſter to preach in the open ſtreets or air when it pours down rain, when he may have ſuch a place as this or that, which is called the Church, to preach in, is diſorderly preaching, and an abuſe of Gods Ordinance. Where I have two places in my choice to preach in at the ſame time, and the one is very convenient, and the other is very inconvenient, I ought not to preach in the inconvenient place. In a word, we be all Gods people and ſervants, and we are not to follow our own wills and humours, but we are to find out Gods will as near as we can, and we are all to deny our ſelves, and what is Gods will that is to take place, and all both Miniſters and people are to be bound by that. And that for the Negative.

2. Poſitively, what is a due call to preach? and this I ſhall give in the words of Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 16. 8,9. *But I will tarry at Epheſus until Pentecoſt; for a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adverſaries.* Hence I do gather, that this is a call to me to preach the Goſpel in this place if I can make out to mine own Conſcience theſe two things: 1. *That a great door is open'd to me.* 2 *That an effectual door is open'd to me, notwithſtanding there be many adverſaries.*

1. Where there is a great door open'd, where there is a great harveſt of needy ſouls to preach to, where there are many hundreds of ſouls, yea of Families, and a great many of them ignorant and worldly, and ſenſual, and as brands already in the fire; multitudes of precious ſouls at the point of everlaſting damnation, bought by the precious blood of the Son of God, every ſoul more worth than a world, and there is notorious want of the means of Grace. Your eyes do ſee, and your ears do hear, you are all witneſſes for me, that there is ſcarce a greater number of ſouls in any one Congregation within theſe two Counties, than in this place where

where we live. And it is a matter of doleful lamentation that there is no more care taken of theſe precious ſouls both in publick and in private. I tell you the Preaching that is in publick is not a due diſcharge of that debt which is due to theſe ſouls, and that thoſe will know to their coſt one day whom it nearly concerns. But I know full well that ſpiritual Judgments are not felt by fleſh and blood. A fire in the thatch doth more frighten than the fire of hell. Both my judgment and practiſe is againſt all cauſeleſs ſeparations. But he is no excellent Chriſtian that ſhall ſay, there is no need of preaching in this place. Thoſe that have a conſtant Preacher within them, a ſanctified renewed conſcience, may better help themſelves, than ignorant ſleepy and dead ſouls, with which this place as moſt others doth abound; and the ſleepy and ſtarving Preaching of worldly, and malignant, and ſenſual Saint-hating Preachers, is not like to be effectual to the wakening and reforming of dead ſouls. Well, I have this call to preach the Goſpel here, here is a great door open'd, a great number of immortal ſouls whoſe neceſſities are a loud call and cry to any compaſſionate Miniſter that believes the Word of God, and knows that they muſt be converted or condemned for ever.

2. Here is not only a great door, but an effectual door open'd. There is reaſon to hope that the preaching of the Goſpel may be effectual to ſome ſouls. There is as true reaſon to hope for Gods bleſſing here as in any other place upon the week-day. But I ſhall tell you negatively what is no bar againſt the effectualneſs of the Goſpel, and poſitively when we may judg the door that is opened to preach the Goſpel ſhall be effectual.

1. Negatively: 1. It is no argument againſt the effectualneſs of the Goſpel, becauſe there are many adverſaries.

2. Nor becauſe there are many opinions and contrary thoughts about it.

1. The preaching of the Goſpel may very well be effectual for all there are many adverſaries. So *Paul* ſays, *A great door and effectual is open'd to me, and there are many adverſaries.* I know all times and places are not alike, and ſometimes it falls out that there are many to encourage and promote the preaching of the Goſpel, and none to hinder it, but the Devil, and ſuch whoſe might and oppoſition is inconſiderable. But though Satan ſhall take to him many aſſiſtants among men, for all that the Goſpel may become effectual. *Moſes* and *Aaron* were commanded to go and

ſpeak

ſpeak to *Pharoah* and the *Egyptians*, though they had none at all but God on their ſide. Jeſus Chriſt had many adverſaries when he was upon earth, and yet he preached up and down in all places where he came, as hath been ſhewed. The Apoſtles had many adverſaries, falſe brethren, hereticks and deceivers, and the rulers and Princes of the world, and yet they preached, and God did bleſs their preaching and labours. What though men and devils conſpire and plot to puniſh the Preachers of the Goſpel, and root out Preaching? that is no juſt reaſon that the Goſpel ſhall not become effectual. It is the moſt likely of all other, God in the end will prove too hard for them all, and he can make his Goſpel more effectual by the ſufferings of his innocent ſervants, and perſecutors may againſt their will moſt promote the Goſpel when they intend and ſeek moſt to overthrow it. See *Phil.* 1. 12, 13, 14, *But I would ye ſhould underſtand brethren, that the things which happen'd unto me, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Goſpel: ſo that my bonds in Chriſt are manifeſt in all the palace, and in all other places: and many of the brethren of the Lord waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to ſpeak the word without fear.*

2. It is no juſt reaſon againſt the effectualneſs of the Goſpel, becauſe there are many opinions and thoughts about it, and one ſays this, and another ſays that, and every one caſts his verdict as he thinks. I cenſure none, I deſpiſe no man, I leave each one to his own thoughts. *Let every man be fully perſwaded in his own breaſt.* If thou think it a ſin to hear Preaching here upon the week-day, make ſure to ſerve God better, and keep thee away. I have no mans Conſcience but mine own, and of my ſelf and mine own acts I muſt give account to God. But if I muſt make opinions my rule, they are ſo many and ſo contradicting, that it is impoſſible to pleaſe all. I believe if it were put to the vote, there would be a great many, yea and I fear the major vote, take in all ſides and parties, would have no Preaching at all; and a great many that are for Preaching, they would have eaſie Preaching, ſuch as might conſiſt with ſin; and a great many are partial, and are too much of a Sect-ſpirit. Some will not come here becauſe he preaches not in the Church; another will hear him becauſe he does not. Some will not hear becauſe he reads Common-prayer; others will hear him becauſe he does. Some think it were better to forbear, and ſome think not. Among all theſe opinions and diverſities of judgments, what ſhall an honeſt plain heart do that would do to the beſt? I may tell

you

you this, that it may be lawful and a duty in you to hear, when it may be unlawful for the Minister to preach. The Minister may have secret grounds and reasons not to preach, and yet the people may have justifiable grounds to hear. See you to your part, and I will endeavour to see to my part. All the while I am the same man here which I am upon the Lords day elsewhere, and teach Christian people the same Doctrine, and pray the same prayers, that may satisfie you for a just call and ground to hear, not being call'd off by weightier matters, and leave me to stand and fall by mine own Conscience, you are safe as to your Conscience. It is I that incur the peril of my Conscience, and of the two I am more perswaded and satisfied to do as I do, than otherwise. As for others censures and opinions, till I can be otherwise convinced, I shall freely bear what any shall say.

2. But I shall tell you positively what is a just reason to hope that the Gospel shall be effectual: 1. When a Ministers heart is set on edg. 2. When God is ready to make the Word effectual, Preacher and people doing their duty.

1. It is a good presage that the Word will become effectual when the Ministers heart is inflamed with love to souls and to the work of God, and earnestly desireth and seeketh the welfare of souls. I know this may be, and yet souls not be converted; but yet of the two this is rather an encouraging sign. *I know* (saith *Paul*) *that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ*, Rom. 15. 29.

2. But the main ground of hope is Gods Word, which assures us that he is ready to grant his blessing if Preacher and people do their duty. *Isa.* 55. 3, *Incline your ear and come unto me: hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting Covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. I never said unto any of the seed of Jakob, seek ye me in vain*, Isa. 45. 19. *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them*, Mat. 18. 20. *Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, wait at the posts of my doors*, Prov. 8. 32, 33, 34. Hath God told you that he will not bless his Word to you though you come and hear it, and do your utmost to profit by it? Can you shew me any one word of God where God hath said, he will not bless and prosper your hearing and attending? If I preach a Sermon of Repentance to you, and you come and hear and lay it up in your heart, will God deny to give his

his bleſſing? Is it not good for you to lye at the Pools mouth? Will it hinder you from repentance to hear a ſerious and hearty Sermon of repentance? Will it ſtrengthen your ſins to hear them laid open to you, and all due ways and means to be ſaved from them? It is not our part to convert ſouls. It is our part to preach to you; but we can neither do Gods part nor your part. But if the Preacher do his part, and the hearers do their part, I do not doubt but God will do his part. And thus I have cleared to you, that a great door and effectual is open'd unto me to preach the Goſpel here; and ſo I have due call.

Two things I muſt tell you further: 1. That whether people hear or hear not, Gods Word ſhall ſtand or be effectual. 2. That whether they profit or not, it ſhall ſtand and be effectual?

1. Whether people hear or hear not, Gods Word ſhall be effectual, they ſhall know that a Preacher hath been among them. Preaching there is, whether they come and hear it or no. They ſhall anſwer to God in the day of Judgment, not only for all the Sermons which they have heard, but for all which they might have heard, if they would. Juſt and godly reaſons to keep away, God will allow; but carnal reaſons he will not allow. There is a day of Judgment where all the matters of this life muſt be open'd, and where Miniſters muſt give account of their Preaching, and people of their attending and hearing. *I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come; I have bought a yoke of oxen, and I a Cloſe or Farm, and I muſt needs go ſee the one, and prove the other.* Theſe were their excuſes of old, and the ſame excuſes are abroad in the world now. But did God allow of them then? no verily, no more will he now. Take heed what you do. Bring the matter to a point of conſcience, and let nothing but conſcience and juſt reaſons keep you away. Preaching is not loſt for want of hearers. The Lord he is hearer, and he is obſerver, and will have his time of reckoning. Peoples neglects do not make the Word of God void.

2. Whether people profit or profit not, Gods Word ſhall ſtand and be effectual. It is no dead letter. It is either ſaving or damning. You cannot go as you come, but you are either better or worſe. If the Word do not ſoften you, it will harden you. Every word you hear hath life or death in it. There is a bleſſing in it to all faithful obedient hearers; and accidentally through their ſin there goes a curſe to all graceleſs and diſobedient hearers. *Though we labour in vain, and ſpend our ſtrength for nought and in vain, yet ſurely our judgment is with the Lord, and our work with our God,* Iſa. 49. 4. *We are a ſweet*

ſavour to God through Chriſt in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh; to the one we are the ſavour of life unto life, and to the other we are the ſavour of death unto death, 2 Cor. 2 15, 16. Do not think that becauſe ſinners hear and are not converted, that the Word of God hath taken no effect. For if people profit not, they run more deeply in arrear to God; their account grows deeper; they will have a ſad reckoning in the end to make. *Wo to thee Chorazin, and wo to thee,* &c. *If thou ſhalt turn away thine ears from hearing the Law and ſhalt ſay unto God, depart from us for we deſire not the knowledg of thy ways,* Job. 21. 14. *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer ſhall be abomination,* Prov. 28. 9. *He that is of God heareth Gods words; ye therefore hear them not, becauſe ye are not of God,* Joh. 8. 47. Well, lay up theſe two words in your hearts, come or come not, profit or profit not, the Word of God ſhall be effectual. Every Sermon preached in this place ſhall riſe up in judgment againſt all that ſhall cauſeleſly abſent themſelves; or coming, ſhall not profit by it. Peoples ſin ſhall not make void Gods word, and that for theſe two Reaſons: 1. Becauſe it is Gods word. 2. It hath been ſo hitherto.

1. It is the word of God, *Iſa.* 55. 10, 11, *As the rain cometh down, and the ſnow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but waters the earth, and makes it bring forth and bud, that it may give ſeed to the ſower, and bread to the eater; ſo ſhall my word be that goeth forth of my mouth, it ſhall not return unto me void, but it ſhall accompliſh that which I pleaſe, and it ſhall proſper in the thing whereto I ſent it.* Gods word written and preached, as the rain and ſnow it ſhall not return again void, it ſhall be effectual the one way or the other. Sometimes the rain and ſnow comes in judgment, and ſweeps away corn, and cattel, and ſubſtance, cauſing great floods; but it never goes back again void, no more doth Gods word. *Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but one jot or tittle of Gods word ſhall not paſs away.* God hath his day a coming *when he will magnifie his word, and make it honourable,* Iſa. 42. 21. He will vindicate all his words, he will call you to account, Where waſt thou at ſuch a Sermon? why I was in the Alehouſe; I was, with *Martha,* cumbred about many things; I was withſtanding the motions of the Spirit of God, and the checks and impulſes of my Conſcience, and deviſing excuſes for not attending Gods word; and why haſt thou not profited by the word? why haſt thou not liv'd a righteous, and a ſober, and a godly life, according to all theſe warnings and inſtructions thou haſt had? What can you ſay? why be ſure he will own his word.

For,

For, 2. He hath own'd it to this day. He hath made it effectual the one way or the other. Could you but see into Hell, you might see multitudes of souls there for not hearing, and for not profiting by Gods word. Gods word was not in vain to *Pharoah*, though he made it so to himself. *Even for this same cause, saith God, have I raised thee up, that I might make my power known in thee*, Rom. 9. 17. Search all the Book of God, and look up the records of all ages, and find out one that was a slighter of Gods word, that had not cause to repent him in the end, down from *Adams* first transgression unto this present moment. *Ezek.* 2. 5, *And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, for they are a rebellious house, yet shall know that there hath been a Prophet among them.*

The further Use I shall make of this, shall be by way of Exhortation. 1. To all in general. 2. To some in particular.

1. To all in general, I shall exhort you to two things: 1. Wisdom. 2 Innocency or sincerity.

1. Wisdom, Heavenly wisdom, godly prudence, Christian discretion, be wise as the Serpent, give no advantage to the adversary. Take heed to all your speeches, and take heed to all your actions; suffer not for evil doing, bring not troubles upon your selves causelessly. Make not the Gospel of Christ and Religion dishonourable through your weaknesses. God is a wise God, and he commands his people to be wise. There is no blot at all cleaves to his good ways; he needs no unrighteous nor imprudent means to compass his ends. Some look all at the end, and some look all at the means. But God requires both the end and regular means. Good intentions, and never so religious zeal, will not justifie any irregularities at all in the means. Any obliquity or mis treading is a blemish, and reflects dishonour upon God. There may be right ends and honest intentions for the main, and yet irregular and mischosen means. Miss it not in any point or circumstance. Tread exactly. *Eccles.* 10. 1, *Dead flies cause the ointment of the Apothecary to send forth a stinking savour, so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.*

2. Innocency and sincerity. Be wise, but withal be innocent; there is indiscreet zeal, and there is carnal discretion and worldly policy. Be true to Conscience, stand and fall with naked truth. Self denial, and taking up the Cross, is the A B C of Christianity. Scotch not at any difficult trying duty. Do not baulk the command of God. Though I would desire and do my best to be so wise as to miss it no one point at all; yet if I must err, and were to chuse my error, I had rather err of

weakneſs than of wilfulneſs; I had rather have a weak head and an honeſt heart, than a cunning politick head, and a jugling falſe heart. Do not bend Gods rules to ſerve carnal ends and intereſt. Innocency and integrity will ſteel a man with courage, and give him boldneſs both with God and man; but a breach in the conſcience, a ſtab at the heart by ſecret ſin and cloſe guilt, will fill the face with ſhame, and take away all courage, and make you ſneak. Chuſe rather to die, than do the leaſt ſin againſt God Have truth and innocency on your ſide, and fear not what man can do. Let me but have rigeteouſneſs and innocency on my ſide, and I will never think my ſelf unhappy or forſaken by God, whatever ſtorms and diſaſters ſhall befall me. The trueſt policy in the world is to be true to God and conſcience, and to take that courſe which will afford a man trueſt comfort when he comes to die, and appear before the Judgment-ſeat of God. God will not judg as men judg. He will paſs a different cenſure upon perſons and actions from what moſt do in this world. Then it ſhall appear who hath ſerved him uprightly, and who hath not, *Mal.* 3. 18.

2. To ſome in particular: 1. To the unwiſe. 2. To the wiſe.

1. To the unwiſe, and thoſe be all impenitent ones: *I am debtor to you in the bonds of the Goſpel; my heart is enlarged towards you. Behold now is the accepted time, behold now is the day of Salvation; to day while it is called to day, harden not your hearts, leſt any of you be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin.*

Two words of counſel and exhortation I have to leave with you: 1. Repentance. 2. Reformation.

1. Repentance: *Except ye repent ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Repent thee of all thy ſins paſt, ſins of omiſſion, and ſins of commiſſion; ſins of ignorance, and ſins againſt knowledg; ſins of paſſion and haſtineſs, and ſins of wilfulneſs and preſumption, thy original and thy actual ſins, repent of them all. There is no ſalve for ſin paſt, but repentance. Break off thy ungodly courſe by repentance, that ſo all thy ſins may be blotted out, otherwiſe thou art in the gall of bitterneſs, and the ſentence of condemnation is upon thee. Find out thy ſins before they find out thee; examine thy heart, and ſearch out thine idols; lay the axe to the root of the tree, and hew down root and branch by ſound repentance. Spare not *Agag* and the fat of the cattel; utterly ſlay both young and old; leave not any ſin to reign in thee. Abandon thy worldlineſs, pride and ſenſuality. Caſt away from thee all the works of darkneſs; ſorrowfully bewail all that is paſt, and loath thy ſelf in thine own ſight for all thine abominations. God is a

a holy

a holy and pure God. Sin is that thing which his righteous ſoul doth hate; out it muſt, or it will be your death. Break thy heart in pieces by godly ſorrow, that being broken God may pour into thee ſpiritual health, and joy, and peace.

2. Repentance is but half repentance without reformation. Ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well. The tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is to be cut down, and caſt into the fire. Thy faith will not ſave thee without good works. He repents not ſincerely who doth not reform his life by forſaking ſin, and practiſing holineſs. Jeſus Chriſt came not only to redeem us from all iniquity, but to purifie to himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of all good works; and that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might ſerve him without fear in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him all the days of our life. Many will come at the great day, and ſay for themſelves: Lord, have we not eaten and drunken in thy preſence? have we not done many marvellous works in thy name? and the Lord will ſay unto them, Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you. Ceaſe thy Alehouſe-haunting, and be a companion of them which fear God. Ceaſe thy worldlineſs, and become a heavenly-minded man. Away with all thine idols and luſts, and become a new creature; learn thy tongue to ſpeak gracious diſcourſe, and frame thy ſelf to lead a holy life, or elſe thou canſt not inherit the Kingdom of God.

2. To you which are wiſe, ſincere Chriſtians: I commend to you alſo theſe two words of Counſel and Exhortation: 1. Increaſe of Wiſdom. 2. Conſtancy and perſeverance to the end.

1. Increaſe of Wiſdom: you are bound to grow in Grace and in the knowledg of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, 2 *Pet.* 3. *ult.* God affords you means of growth and ſpiritual increaſe, and you are blame worthy if you do not; nay, if you do not grow forward, you go backward; if you be not better you are worſe. If there be life in you, there will be growth, or a tendency and ſtriving towards growth, and an earneſt care and endeavour to be better and better. Shall children always be children? Shall learners always be in their Horn-book and Primer? Do you not ſee how new-born Infants grow, how plants and herbs, and graſs, and corn grow? Shall not your time be improved to ſome growth? Doth not God rain down mercies in ſtore upon you? Are you not planted in a fruitful ſoil? Have you not the Goſpel of the Kingdom of God? Are there not loud alarms to growth in grace, and ſtability and firmneſs in the faith of Chriſt? He that thinketh he hath grace enough, hath none at all. He that thinks he needs

needs be no more holy, is ſtark unholy. The ſmalleſt ſpark of ſaving-grace doth carry out the ſoul to long and thirſt after more grace; and he that doth not zealouſly and earneſtly ſtrive and endeavour to grow in grace and real holineſs, hath juſt cauſe to fear he hath no grace at all. Look about you, for it much concerns you.

2. Perſeverance and conſtancy to the end. *Be thou faithful unto death, and God will give thee a crown of life*, Revel. 2. 10. It is only they which endure to the end which ſhall be ſaved. If any man draw back, Gods ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him. Never think to find thee a better Maſter than God, a better Saviour than Chriſt, a better portion than Heaven, a better treaſure than holineſs and a good conſcience, and better terms and conditions of Salvation than repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, producing ſincere obedience. Be ſincere, and hold on to the end. Having begun in the ſpirit do not end in the fleſh. The worſt is paſt with thee, only hold on. Thou art not yet in Heaven. Thou haſt many a prayer to make, and many a holy truth to learn, and many a good work to do, and many a holy duty to perform, and many a temptation to reſiſt, and many a croſs and burden to bear and undergo; thou haſt a death to die and go through. Converſion is not all. Thy work is not done when thou art new begun and entred into the holy path. Thou muſt finiſh thy work before thou canſt be rewarded. Thou ſtandeſt by faith, be not high minded, but fear. All is loſt without perſeverance. None are ſo deplorate wretches as Apoſtates. Better a great deal never to have known the way of truth, than having known it, to turn from it, and with the ſow that was waſhed to thy wallowing in the mire of ſin again, and with the dog to lick up thy vomit again. The holy fear of Apoſtacy is one chief means to preſerve us from Apoſtacy. 2 *Chron.* 15. 2, *The Lord is with you whilſt you be with him, and if ye ſeek him he will be found of you; but if ye forſake him, he will forſake you.* Lay up this plain word in your hearts, and beware of all abatements, decays and conſumptions of grace. Riſe from your falls by ſpeedy and ſound repentance. Shew your ſelves men. You have a great part of your way and work over. You have but a while to hold out. Take heart and courage, and renew your reſolutions before the Lord this day. A Chriſtian I am, and a Chriſtian I will be. There be many ſects and parties in the world, and one is for this, and another for that, but reſolve, Chriſtian, whilſt I ſhall find ſuch ſentences as theſe in the Book of God: *Follow peace with all men, and holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord. Give all diligence to make your calling and election*

election ſure. He hath ſhewed thee O man what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do juſtly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. Whilſt God is a God of holineſs, whilſt heaven is a ſtate of holineſs, whilſt I have breath to breathe, and limbs to move, I will be for holineſs, and for that ſide and party, and profeſſion, which is for real ſcriptural impartial godlineſs and ſincerity, in oppoſition to the world, the fleſh, and the devil.

3. I have a word to two ſorts more: 1. Miniſters. 2. Private Chriſtians.

1. Miniſters, two words I will leave for them whether any be preſent or no.

1. This is your copy to write after. 2. Write after it, and ſhew it forth accordingly.

1. This is your copy to write after: Brethren, we are debtors to all, we owe love and kindneſs to all; we may owe ſpecial attendance, labour, and pains to ſome, and that not drink up all our thoughts and time, and care, and pains. The harveſt truly is great, the faithful labourers in publick are but few. The ſheep of Chriſt are many and precious, but the faithful and diligent ſhepherds are not many. He paſſes for a good Miniſter in our times that is not ſo bad as many are. It is the diſeaſe of our people that they know not the work of the Goſpel and the Miniſtry, and they are but too well content to be without. We are to be men of ſelf-denying, and publick, and impartial ſpirits and to bear upon our hearts the ſtate of all Chriſts Churches, and do our utmoſt night and day to help all, without any juſt neglect to our particular charge and place. They are wolves and no right ſhepherds of Chriſt, who do nothing concern themſelves for others. Indeed no man can truly tend his own ſoul, but he will tend his peoples ſouls, and thoſe which be under his charge, and will lend unto all about him all the help he can. I do ſet before you the rule, he that can receive it, let him receive it. All caſes and circumſtances are not alike.

2. Write after this copy: Have a large heart and fervent charity and compaſſion to the flock of Chriſt, this is the prime thing; we may love where we cannot expreſs our love by outward works; but as much as in you lyes write after this copy, and ſhew it forth: 1. By Preaching. 2 By living.

1. By Preaching: Preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon; ſave as many ſouls as you can. There will be enough to periſh when we have done our beſt and utmoſt. 2. Shew it forth by godly

living,

living, or elſe you will preach your own condemnation, and open the mouths of the wicked, and give cauſe of ſcandal to your people, and tempt them to go from you, and either to run into groſs hereſie or ſchiſm. Wo be to them by whom offences come, and wo be to the Paſtors of Chriſts flock, which by their covetouſneſs, negligence, and ill examples, are an occaſion of the ruin of many of their peoples ſouls. The Lord lay not the blood of ſouls to our charge. O how many Preachers and Paſtors are there in this age, which be publick ſcandals! *From the Prophets of Jeruſalem is profaneneſs gone forth into all the land*, Jer. 23. 15. I will ſay two words more to you: 1. Fear not the face of man. 2. Fear not evil tidings.

1. Fear not the face of man, *Iſa.* 31. 3, *Now the Egyptians are men and not God, and their horſes fleſh and not ſpirit.* 51. 12. *I, even I am he that comforteth you: who art thou that thou ſhouldſt be afraid of a man that ſhall die, and of the ſon of man which ſhall be made as graſs, and forgetteſt the Lord thy maker?* Iſa. 51. 12, 13. *And I ſay unto you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom ye ſhall fear, fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to caſt into hell; yea I ſay unto you fear him*, Luk. 12. 4, 5. They are not ſo great but there is one greater than them. They are not ſo high, but there is one above them. *Though they be gods they ſhall die like men: Put not your truſt in Princes, nor in the ſon of man in whom there is no help, his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts periſh. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whoſe hope is in the Lord his God*, Pſal. 146. 4, 5, 6. *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* Rom. 8. 31.

2. Be not afraid of evil tidings: It is ſaid of the righteous, *He ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed truſting in God; his heart is eſtabliſhed, he ſhall not be afraid*, Pſal. 112. 7, 8. *Through many tribulations we muſt enter into the Kingdom of God, and all that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer perſecution.* Fear ſinning, and fear to offend God, but fear not any evil that can befall you for well-doing; do your duty, and leave the iſſue to God. *Say ye to the righteous it ſhall go well with them, for they ſhall eat the fruit of their doings. Wo unto the wicked it ſhall go ill with them; for the reward of their hands ſhall be given them*, Iſa. 3. 10, 11. Let the child of God repoſe himſelf in the arms of his Heavenly Father. Let God alone with the Government of the World. Let God govern Church and State; let him do what he pleaſes. He is moſt wiſe, and he is moſt good,

good, and it pertains to him to rule the affairs of the world, and not to us. *We are ſure that all things ſhall work together for good to them that love God*, Rom. 8. 28. Let this ſatisfie your hearts, it is God that reigneth and ruleth over all, and neither men nor devils. They are but Gods agents or inſtruments acted or permitted by him; they ſhall but accompliſh Gods promiſes to his faithful ones, and his threatnings to all the wicked. Thoſe are evil tidings which threaten the ruin of Godlineſs, and the rooting up of the Goſpel, and the impoveriſhing of our ſouls. But this lyes not in the power of men to do. Mortifie your luſts, walk humbly with God, lay up your treaſure in Heaven, flouriſh and proſper in your ſouls, and fear not evil tidings, for they ſhall all work together for your everlaſting good; be afraid of your ſelves; you can be overcome of none but your ſelves.

2. To private Chriſtians, I ſhall leave two words with you to think on and practiſe. 1. Perſonal Holineſs. 2. Family Holineſs.

1. Perſonal Holineſs: Live and ſhew forth the power and ſpirit of Holineſs; be ſincere before God; do uprightneſs, truth and juſtice towards all. Godlineſs is not form and oſtentation; it is the ſanctification of the whole man; it is a conformity of heart and life to the whole will of God. *God is holy, be ye holy. This is the will of God even your Sanctification. Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee God.* Live not in any known ſin. Stand not in any evil way before God. *Let your light ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven.* You are called Saints, live like Saints. You are called Chriſtians, live like Chriſtians. You hope for great things from God, live anſwerable to your hopes. You have an excellent pattern, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, walk worthy of him, and anſwer his example. Be amiable unſpotted Chriſtians throughout your whole converſation. Let there be no flaw, let there be no defect in your lives, nothing that your conſciences ſhall reproach you for. Preach the Goſpel by your lives, and exemplifie all the rules of holineſs to your neighbours, and let them ſee the excellency of humility and meekneſs, goodneſs and charity, mortification and contempt of the world in your lives. Love your enemies, bleſs them which curſe you; do good to them which do evil to you; overcome evil with good; be courteous, be loving, be merciful, be all things which are excellent and praiſe-worthy.

2. Family holineſs: reſolve with bleſſed *Joſhua, I and my houſe*

ſhall

ſhall ſerve the Lord. Walk before the Lord in the midſt of your houſe with a perfect heart. Teach your children the fear of God; Catechiſm them in the Principles of Chriſt duly and conſtantly. By your good will have no ſervant for your ſervant that is not a ſervant of God. Sanctifie the Lords-day; maintain the Communion of the Saints; practiſe diſgraced and denied duties; and be not aſhamed of glorifying God before the world; you have the charge of ſouls committed to you. Parents have a great reckoning to make for their Children, and Maſters and Dames for their ſervants. *The curſe of the Lord is in the houſe of the wicked, but he bleſſeth the habitation of the juſt*, Prov. 3. 33. O what matter of lamentation is it that there ſhould be ſo many prayerleſs Families among us! It is a ſadder ſight than if the Plague ſhould be riſe among us, and upon every prayerleſs Family ſhould be written the common Plague-mark, *God be merciful to us.* Theſe two things I deſire to bend my ſelf with all my might to promote throughout the whole courſe of my Miniſtry, Perſonal-holineſs, and Family-holineſs. If you have no Miniſters and publick Ordinances, if we ſhall be taken away from you, yet do your duty, governing your ſelves and families in the fear of God, and doubt not, the Lord will be with you.

I ſhall preſs all this duty upon you by theſe two motives, and ſo end: 1. Do it for your own ſakes. 2. Do it for our ſakes and the Goſpel.

1. Do it for your own ſakes, and the children of your own bowels; you will find the profit and comfort of it now, you will reap the endleſs benefit of it hereafter. The more holineſs now, the more happineſs hereafter, and the more comfort and ſweetneſs here uſually. Give your ſelves wholly to ſerve God, and he will be abundant in his rewards to you. Whatſoever is good for you, you may juſtly expect from God, if you do but do your duty. And if you will not, God hath his rod and ſcourge for you in this life, and he hath everlaſting plagues in the other; though you cannot ſave others, you may ſave your ſelves. And if you do not ſave your ſelves, you may danger to deſtroy many more with you. A graceleſs father or mother may be the ruin of many children from one generation to another. There is nothing ſo good as godlineſs and everlaſting joys, there is nothing ſo evil as wickedneſs and everlaſting torments. You muſt all die and come to judgment, and then nothing will be your crown and comfort but true holineſs; therefore mind this, be wiſe for your ſelves and families; take not

example

example by the greater party; Jewels are rare, Gold is not ſo common as duſt and dung; ſecure your ſouls, and you are happy; loſe thoſe, and how great is your loſs! The world may call thee a wiſe man, and thou maiſt think well of thy ſelf; but aſſuredly God will repute thee a fool, and thine own conſcience more than a thouſand Witneſſes and Judges will condemn thee.

2. Do it for our ſakes in the Miniſtry, and for the Goſpels ſake; not for our ſake as we are of our ſelves, but as we are the Miniſters of Chriſt, and ſhould be his glory in the world. There are no perſecutions ſo grievous to a right-aiming Miniſter, of Chriſt as the ungodlineſs and unprofitableneſs of his people. You ſee how we are the common Butt of all the brood of Satan, though we do but preach the ſame Doctrine which others preach, and pray the ſame prayers which others pray, yet what a hainous crime we are accuſed of, becauſe we do but that in ſincerity which they do in hypocriſie, we do that uprightly which they do formally and Phariſaically. Could we but play the Hypocrites, and lay by our holineſs, and pray and preach without all ſpiritualities and heavenly life and fervour, we might pray and preach as long as we would. You are greatly miſtaken if you think that preaching in this or that place gives the offence; no Chriſtians, it is not bare preaching and praying which is the matter, there's a further thing than that; that doth but give the occaſion, but the ground and bottom of all is, there is *Cain* and *Abel* in the world; there is the ſeed of the Woman, and the ſeed of the Serpent. They call us Schiſmaticks, and turbulent, and proud, and buſie-bodies, and this and the other crimination and foul name, and pretence; they do not deny us leave to preach, but only in this or that place; alas that is not the matter, that's a poor thing. The Devil doth hate true holineſs, and that Preaching and Praying which tendeth to promote true holineſs. He is ſenſible of this, and therefore arms his inſtruments with wrath, and pride, and malice, and an inveterate ſpirit, and uſeth all the means he can to get down true godlineſs. I am very confident this is the root of the matter, other things are but matters by the by. You may plainly ſee the ſame malignant ſpirit that is in *Quakers* and *Papiſts*, and ſuch as do utterly renounce all Communion with us, doth reign in thoſe which are of our own judgment and profeſſion with us. And they cannot for their lives cloak and conceal their malignity, but out it comes before all the world. And I am ſo far from repenting me for any thing I have done in this undertaking, that I do verily hope God will clear my innocency, and make it to appear that holineſs lyes

at

at the root and bottom of it, whatever the thoughts and cenſures of men ſhall be. And let them do their utmoſt. Holineſs, will ſtand, and they ſhall never get it down. But if they down with us, God will make the ruins and calamities of his innocent ſuffering ſervants to make for the greater growth and credit of Holineſs; and all men ſhall ſee that it is not in vain to truſt in God. But let it be your care to give all encouragement to Chriſts Miniſters by exemplary holineſs, humility, meekneſs, patience and godlineſs, avoiding all appearance of evil. As we endeavour to preach the Goſpel of Chriſt to you with much contention, to the hazard of all we have, and that which is dear to us indeed, our reputation with ſome good people; ſo let us beg of you, that you would walk worthy of the Goſpel, and by Perſonal and Family-holineſs manifeſt to the world the excellency, ſweetneſs, power and profit of it to Gods glory, your own everlaſting happineſs, and the good of others. *To God be praiſe for ever*, Amen.

FINIS.